2: Thompson E-5 (1933-1934)1940 OQ6 Lau OQ6
Kambara

An old informant says:

> Before the time of the colonial government we had many pigs because we did not need to feed them. A fence of posts, running along the outskirts of the village from the beach to the cliff, kept the animals away from dwellings, but gave them access to the beach and the jungle where fruits, roots, insects, and greens afforded abundant food. Each household had its pigs and had a special place along the fence where it threw food to them. Often the fences were not kept in repair and animals found their way into the village and the houses. Hence the government ordered each pig owner to keep his animals in pens outside the village. Since that time pigs have had to be fed and, as food is scarce, the number has declined rapidly.

In December 1933, there were only 14 brood sows and one boar on Kambara. All these pigs, with the exception of one that had been brought as a farrow from Totoya, were of the razor-backed, long-legged, Polynesian breed. The animals were kept in pens about 9 meters square, with stone or wooden fences 1 to 1.5 meters high. Each sow had a single pen. In Tokalau one large pen was divided into two parts by a stone wall. The wall had a hole large enough for a farrow to slip through. Whenever the sow wanted a rest she would urge the litter into the other pen where the pigs were fed. The owner said, "Some day the farrows will be so big that they cannot return to the mother and then we shall know how big they are."

The farrows stay with the sow as long as she can give them a drop of milk, often three or four months. The sow by that time has been reduced almost to a skeleton. Pigs of the same litter weigh from 20 to 40 pounds at the age of four months. If a farrow is slow in development the owner takes it home, where it is tied to a tree and given special food. Children play with it and occasionally the owner takes it for a walk. Some owners let their pigs run about after they have left the mother. They are usually kept out of the village, but there are often one or two to be seen around the earth oven and occasionally they enter the houses.

Pigs may be fed by men or women; the women usually feed them with coconut in the late forenoon. Beside each pen a husking stake (*ndoko*) is driven into the ground. In the evening a man, usually the owner, goes to the pen with a bundle of grass and leaves carried on a stick resting on his shoulder. He feeds the grass to the animals and gives them coconut meat. Most pigs are killed when they weigh 90 to 100 pounds, and are presented ceremonially to visiting chiefs or government officials.

The natives did not know the period of gestation for pigs. Their estimate of from three to five months is significant, as a farrow born only a day or two before it is due cannot live. Sows with many teats are preferred for breeding for they are considered most fertile. I did not find any pig able to suckle more than eight young ones and not one animal with a litter of more than six.

A boar is considered best between four and six years. Later he loses in potency. The only boar on Kambara was seven years old. The year before a

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and develop a finer shell and flavor than they would in the open sea. On the shore at one corner of the lake are a few shelters of pandanus and coconut leaves where the turtles rest and dig their nest holes. The natives say the old female watches the eggs when they are about to hatch and that before the young ones reach the water she eats some of them.

It is said that in olden days the chiefs used the lake as a breeding pond for turtles and that since then the Naivotavota, Tanggu, and Saumua (Tokalau) clans have replenished the supply of young turtles from the open sea.

Near Nggalinggali is a turtle fence 5 meters in diameter, in which turtles to be butchered are kept. The fence is circular and consists of sticks rammed into the ground near the beach. The sticks stand only 3 cm. apart and are tied together with *wali* string.

Gardening

New land is rarely cleared. When it is cleared, a flat spot with a few big trees is selected. A fire is lighted around the trunk, and soon the bark dries and loosens. After a few months the foliage drops and as the years pass the branches drop, but the trunks remain a long time. On one spot, said to have been cleared 15 years ago, the big, white trunks are still standing and sweet yam vines climb on them. Sometimes cleared land is not used for a garden, either because the native has not had enough energy to loosen the soil and prevent shrubs and bushes from growing, or because an evil spirit is discovered in the neighborhood.

Garden produce

As far as possible, crops are rotated. Usually on the best land on most of the islands crops are rotated as follows: a crop of sweet potatoes, another crop of sweet potatoes, a fallow year, a crop of *kawai* (sweet yams) which are stringy and are cultivated only on islands with poor soil. The following rotation is considered ideal: yams, sweet potatoes, manioc. The land is then allowed to lie fallow for a year or even longer. Soil conditions, however, do not permit this preferable rotation except perhaps on Mothe, Komo, and Namuka. Since on all the islands a larger acreage is planted with manioc than with yams or sweet potato, two crops of manioc are often planted in succession on the same land.

Manioc

The varieties of manioc (called manioke; forms of the cultivated Manihot) are: *mbavisondoi* (many branched); *vula telu* (three months, because it ought to be planted in three months only—February, March, and April); *niumea* (the natives claim that this variety came from Noumea, New Caledonia);